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Diana T Fritz 08/27/2006 04:49:27 PM From DB/Inbox: Search Results

Cable
Text:

S E C R E T ABU DHABI 05243

SIPDIS
CXABU:

ACTION: AMB
INFO: PAO P/M MEPI DCM ECON POL RSO

DISSEMINATION: AMB
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: CDA:MRQUINN
DRAFTED: POL:BTHOMSON
CLEARED: POL:RFORD

VZCZCADI177
PP RUEHC RUCNRAQ RUEHDE
DE RUEHAD #5243/01 3641023
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
P 301023Z DEC 05
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2975
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 5670

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 005243

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/FO, NEA/I, AND NEA/ARPI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/28/2015
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PTER](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#) [AE](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR KHALILZAD VISIT TO ABU DHABI: ACHIEVING
A NATIONAL UNITY GOVERNMENT IN IRAQ

Classified By: CDA Martin R. Quinn, reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (S) Summary: On December 27, Ambassador Khalilzad met with Deputy Prime Minister/MinState for Foreign Affairs Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan(HbZ). Discussion centered on recent elections in Iraq and the need for a unification government to bring peace and stability to the country. Ambassador Khalilzad outlined a strategy to forge a Sunni, Kurdish and Allawi's bloc to negotiate with the Shia parties to build a national unity government, requesting UAEG help in reinforcing the message with Sunnis. HbZ promised to do what he could, urging the USG to press the same message with the Kurds. End Summary.

GOALS
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¶2. (S) Ambassador Khalilzad opened by addressing complaints of election irregularities, stating that even as the U.S. pursues international cooperation in examining reports, he saw nothing that would change or invalidate the results. He emphasized that all parties must turn their attention to forming a national unity government based on accepted election results. Ambassador outlined immediate goals in the formation of the new Iraqi government. First, a true unification government should be the result, since a Shia/Kurdish coalition with only token Sunni participation would exacerbate ethnic and sectarian tensions. Second, there should be significant movement towards achieving a meritocracy with ministers chosen on the basis of competence. He noted that Iran is pushing strongly for a Shia/Kurdish alliance.

PREVENTING A BREAK IN THE RANKS
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13. (S) Ambassador Khalilzad explained that if Iyad Allawi's list, Tawaffuq, and the Kurds can hold together as a coalition, they will constitute a power equal to the Shia and command a position to negotiate a government and select Iraq's leadership. However, if either Allawi, the Sunnis or the Kurds cut from the rest to make separate deals in exchange for a ministry here or there, the Shia would achieve dominance. Khalilzad asked HbZ to use UAEG influence to persuade Allawi not to leave Iraq, and the Sunnis not to attempt to cut a separate deal with the Shia. HbZ stated that he had the same discussion with Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan (MbZ), Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, earlier in the day, and that their analysis of the situation is similar. HbZ added that the most important point is preventing the Kurds from breaking ranks; he observed that the USG is in a better position to reinforce this message with the Kurds. Khalilzad added that the goal of achieving a national unity government in Iraq should become a regional strategy and asked HbZ to present it to fellow concerned states and to encourage them to embrace the goal.

CURBING VIOLENCE; ELIMINATING IRANIAN INFLUENCE

14. (S) Khalilzad turned to another key element: curbing the violence in Iraq. He told HbZ that during the election period the U.S. had suspended large-scale military operations, limiting itself to targeted counter-terrorist actions only, and that many insurgents reciprocated, allowing elections to proceed in relative calm. Khalilzad said the US would continue to focus operations against Al Qaeda and other terror groups. He asked HbZ to use UAE influence with Sunni leaders to renew their call for restraint. He explained that once a national unity government is formed, the insurgency itself will lose legitimacy -- and violence will decline over time. The aim, Khalilzad stressed, is to make armed resistance against the new government itself illegitimate. HbZ remarked that the U.S. understands Iraq far better now than in the past and that the Ambassador's analysis provided the UAEG "relief from many of our concerns." He stated that Iraq still has a long way to go, and that although the Ambassador had identified two important steps, forming a legitimate government and stopping the violence, there was one more vital step: eliminating Iranian influence in the South. Ambassador pressed HbZ again to lean on influential expatriate Iraqis like Dubai-based Ahmad Al Kubaysi to issue statements calling for cessation of violence and participation in the political process.

GCC ROLE: REGIONAL STRATEGY

15. (S) HbZ promised to report the conversation to UAE President, Sheikh Khalifa, and to MbZ, and said he would do what he could with the GCC and others with the qualification that although the UAE would be on board he "doubted the GCC's resolve." Khalilzad responded: "If we can get the government right, everything else will fall into place." He added that the mindset that participants in the post-election process are somehow doing the U.S. a favor must be changed. Agreeing, HbZ added that the Sunnis will not make the mistake of not participating again. Ambassador noted that in his earlier meeting in Riyadh, the Saudi Foreign Minister expressed concerns that the Sunnis could be easily provoked, recommending that positive encouragement from other Arab states could be very helpful. Expressing concurrence, HbZ promised to do what he could.

IRAQIS IN ABU DHABI

16. (C) Comment: Ambassador Khalilzad's meeting with HbZ was directly preceded by the Al Nahyan sheikh's brief reception of Iraqi National Security Adviser Mowaffak Al Rubaie and other Iraqis visiting Abu Dhabi for a conference on the Iraqi Constitution sponsored by the quasi-official, UAEG-funded Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research.

17. (U) This message has been cleared by Ambassador Khalilzad.
QUINN